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(MCCONE)

WASHINGTON--JOHN A. MCCONE GOT THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION OUT OF A SERIOUS JAM WITH CONGRESS.

"AND IF THE CIA NEEDS STRAIGHTENING OUT," SAYS A CLOSE ACQUAINTANCE, "JOHN MCCONE IS JUST THE MAN TO DO IT."

MCCONE, 59-YEAR-OLD SAN FRANCISCO INDUSTRIALIST, IS A GRACIOUS MAN, THE KIND WHO SMILES AND REMEMBERS TO SAY "PLEASE" AND "THANK YOU."

BUT OCCASIONALLY THE SMILE VANISHES. OCCASIONALLY THE BLUE EYES GLARE. THEN IT IS EASY TO BELIEVE WHAT ANOTHER ACQUAINTANCE SAYS: "HE IS A TERRIBLY DEMANDING AND HARD-DRIVING BUSINESS EXECUTIVE. HE IS THE MAN-IN-CHARGE."

WHEN PRESIDENT KENNEDY PICKED MCCONE THIS WEEK TO SUCCEED ALLEN W. DULLES AS CIA DIRECTOR, THE CIA WAS STILL BEING BLAMED -- RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY -- FOR THE FAILURE OF THE U.S.-SUPPORTED ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW THE CASTRO DICTATORSHIP IN CUBA.

BECAUSE OF THE 68-YEAR-OLD DULLES' SENSATIONAL CAREER AS A U.S. AGENT IN WORLD WAR II AND HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICES SINCE, CIA CRITICS WERE RELUCTANT TO BLAME HIM PERSONALLY FOR THE CUBAN FIASCO.

BUT THERE HAVE BEEN CHARGES THAT "MIDDLE ECHELON" OFFICIALS IN HIS AGENCY HAVE REPEATEDLY GONE TOO FAR IN THEIR ZEAL AND OFTEN HAVE GOT THE COUNTRY INTO HOT WATER.

ONE OF THE THINGS BEING SAID OF MCCONE IS THAT WHEN HE TAKES OVER IN NOVEMBER, HE WILL BE THE BOSS AND THE CIA WILL ATTEMPT NO VENTURES WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN THOROUGHLY THOUGHT OUT IN ADVANCE.

WHEN HE TOOK OVER THE AEC IN MID-1958, IT WAS IN BAD TROUBLE WITH THE HOUSE-SENATE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMITTEE. THE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN, LEWIS L. STRAUSS, AND THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, SEN. CLINTON F. ANDERSON, D., N.M., DESPIES EACH OTHER. THE ATOMIC PROGRAM SUFFERED.

MCCONE, A REPUBLICAN, QUICKLY WON OVER THE DEMOCRATIC MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE. WHEN